



CITY OF HOUSTON

Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance

INS AND OUTS OF CITY CONTRACTING

Soliciting business from the City and/or its contractors can be a frustrating, non-productive experience if you do not learn the system. Remember – City certification does not guarantee City business. You still have to market your company to the individuals that count. These suggestions can help you secure those contracts.

- I. **Get a Vendor Number.** This puts you in the City's database and helps to facilitate the payment process. Vendors can request a vendor number by going to http://www.fasped.ci.houston.tx.us/registration_form.aspx. Allow at least five working days and then call our Vendor Desk at (713) 247-1740 to follow up on your registration form and obtain your assigned supplier number. Vendor numbers can also be obtained in person from the Strategic Purchasing Division at 901 Bagby, Room B-120, in the basement of City Hall.

- II. **Look for opportunities.** Do not wait for City contracting opportunities to come knocking on your door.

For suppliers of goods or non-professional services:

- Call the Bid Hotline at (713) 247-BIDS (2437) for the current listing of bid advertisements over \$25,000.
- Go to the basement of City Hall (901 Bagby) to view current requests for proposals and bids and get a vendor number if you don't have one.
- Check the Notice to Bidder section in each Friday's **Houston Business Journal** as well as the City's Strategic Purchasing Division web site at <http://www.houstontx.gov/purchasing> for prime and/or subcontracting opportunities. Tune in to the Municipal Access Channel on Time Warner Communication Cable TV for weekly bid advertisements.
- Attend pre-bid and pre-proposal conferences to meet potential prime contractors. Schedules of pre-bid and pre-proposal conferences can be found on the City's Strategic Purchasing Division web site at <http://www.houstontx.gov/purchasing>.
- Network.

For construction and construction-related firms:

- Check the Notice to Bidder section in each Friday's **Houston Chronicle** and **Houston Business Journal** for prime and/or subcontracting opportunities.
- Attend pre-bid conferences to meet potential prime contractors. Schedules of pre-bid and pre-proposal conferences can be found on the City's Strategic Purchasing Division web site at <http://www.houstontx.gov/purchasing>.
- Contact successful low bidders to show how you can help them meet the MWDBE and/or PDBE goal.
- Network.

For professional service providers:

- Find the City department(s) that utilizes your service. Call the Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Division at (713) 837-9000 for further assistance.
- Architects and Engineers (A&E) should go to 611 Walker, 5th Floor, to pick up form PWE-100 for inclusion in the City's A&E database. You can also obtain it on the Internet at <http://www.publicworks.cityofhouston.gov/documents/A-E%20Quals/pwe100in.pdf>.
- Contact the City department to let them know what you do and request to be included on the Request for Proposal (RFP) list.
- Check the **Houston Chronicle**, the **Houston Business Journal**, and minority publications for Requests for Proposals.
- Attend pre-proposal conferences to meet potential prime contractors.
- Network.

- III. **When bidding/proposing, make sure that the specifications are met.**

When responding to a bid or RFP, be sure to:

- Read everything.
- Make certain that your goods or services meet City specifications.
- Sign your bid.
- Turn in your bid/offer on time. No exceptions for late responses.
- If you are unsuccessful, keep trying. Go to the City Secretary's Office (Cit Hall Annex, Public Level, 900 Bagby) to review the successful bidder's submission to be better prepared next time.

- IV. **Call the Affirmative Action and Contract Compliance Division for assistance at (713) 837-9000 or visit our web site at www.houstontx.gov.** Be sure to download the City Contracting Guide, *The Source*, the Construction Industry Resource Guide, and the Sources of Assistance Business Resource Guide.